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By Mr. T O W N,

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— Nulla virtute redemptum —
A vitiis.

HOR.



MENTIONED in a former paper, that a friend of mine was writing *A New Treatise on Ethics*, or, *A System of Immoral Philosophy*, compiled from the principles and practice of the present age; in which the extraordinary modesty of the Moderns would be enlarged on, which has induced them to comprehend all the vices, instead of virtues, in their idea of a Fine Gentleman. The work is now finished; and the Author has sent me the following letter concerning the Dedication, with leave to submit it to the public.

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DEAR

DEAR TOWN,

THE flatness and fulsome insipidity of Dedications has often been the subject of our conversation; and we have always agreed, that Authors have miscarried in these pieces of flattery, by injudiciously affronting, when they meant to compliment their patrons. The humble Dedicator loads his Great Man with virtues totally foreign to his nature and disposition, which sit as awkwardly upon him, as lace or embroidery on a chimney-sweeper: and so overwhelms him with the huge mass of learning, with which he graciously dubs him a scholar, that he makes as ridiculous a figure as the As in the *Dunciad*. After having thus bepraised his patron, till the new *Mæcenas* is heartily ashamed of himself, he wonders that no notice is taken of so pompous an eulogium, and that a Dedication should be as mere a drug as a sermon.

Lory in the *Relapse* advises *Fashion* to get into the good graces of Lord *Foppington* by falling in love with his coat, being in raptures with his peruke, ravished with the genteel dangle of his sword-knot; and, in short, to recommend himself to his noble elder brother, by seeming to be captivated with his favourites. In like manner, the author, who would make his Dedication really valuable, should not talk to his patron of his honour, and virtue, and integrity, and a pack of unfashionable qualities, which only serve to disgrace a Fine Gentleman, but boldly paint him what he really is, and at the same time convince him of his merit in being a fool, and his glory in being a scoundrel. This mode of Dedication, though proper at all times, will appear with a particular good grace, before a *System of Immoral Philosophy*: wherefore,

fore, as my book is now finished, I have here sent you a rough draught of the Epistle Dedicatory, and shall be glad to hear your opinion of it.

May it please your Grace! or, My Lord! or, Sir!

YOU are in every point so complete a Fine Gentleman, that the following treatise is but a faint transcript of your accomplishments. There is not one qualification, requisite in the character of a man of spirit, which you do not possess. Give me leave therefore, on the present occasion, to point forth your inestimable qualities to the world, and hold up to the public view so glorious an example.

YOU distinguished yourself so early in life, and exalted yourself so far above the common pitch of vulgar Bucks, that you was distinguished, before the age of twenty, with the noble appellation of STAG. And when I consider the many gallant exploits you have performed, the number of rascally poltroons you have sent out of the world, the number of pretty little foundlings you have brought into it, how many girls you have debauched, how many women of quality you have intrigued with, and how many hogheads of *French* wine have run through your body, I cannot help contemplating you as a STAG of the first head.

WHAT great reason have you to value yourself on your noble Atchievements at *Arthur's*! the sums you formerly lost, and those you have lately won, are amazing instances of your spirit and address; first, in venturing so deeply before you was let into the secret, and then, in managing it with so much adroitness and dexterity, since you
have

have been acquainted with it. Nobody cogs the dice, or packs the cards half so skilfully; you hedge a bet with uncommon nicety; and are a most incomparably shrewd judge of the odds.

NOR have your exploits on the Turf rendered you less famous. Let the annals of *Pond* and *Heber* deliver down to posterity the glorious account of what plates you have won, what matches you made, and how often the Knowing Ones have been taken in, when, for private reasons, you have found it necessary that your horse should run on the wrong side of the post, or be distanced, after winning the first heat. I need not mention your own skill in Horsemanship, and in how many matches you have condescended to ride yourself; for in this particular it must be acknowledged that you cannot be outdone even by your groom or jockey.

ALL the world will witness the many instances of your Courage, which has been often tried and exerted in *Hyde-Park*, and behind *Montague-House*: nay, you have sometimes been known to draw your sword most heroically at the opera, the play, and even at private routes and assemblies. How often have you put to flight a whole army of watchmen, constables, and beadles, with the justices at their head! You have cleared a whole bawdy-house before you, and taken many a tavern by storm: you have pinned a waiter to the ground, and have besides proved yourself an excellent marksman, by shooting a post-boy flying. With so much valour and firmness, it is not to be doubted, but that you would behave with the same intrepidity, if occasions called, upon *Hounslow-Heath*, or in *Maidenhead-Thicket*:

head-Thicket: and, if it were necessary, you would as boldly resign yourself up to the hands of *Jack Ketch*, and swing as genteely as *Maclean* or *Gentleman Harry*. The same noble spirit would likewise enable you to aim the pistol at your own head, and go out of the world like a man of honour and a gentleman.

BUT your Courage has not rendered you insusceptible of the softer passions, for which your heart has been ever inclined. To say nothing of your gallantries with women of fashion, your intrigues with milliners and mantua-makers, or your seducing of raw country girls, and innocent tradesmens daughters, you have formerly been so constant in your devoirs to Mrs. *Douglass*, and the whole sister-hood, that you sacrificed your health and constitution in their service. But above all, witness that sweet delicate creature, whom you have now in keeping; and for whom you entertain such a strong and faithful passion, that for her sake you have tenderly and affectionately deserted your wife and family.

THOUGH from your elegant taste for pleasures you appear made for the gay world, yet these polite Amusements have not called off your attention from the more serious studies of Politics and Religion. In Politics you have made such a wonderful proficiency, both in theory and practice, that you have discovered the good of your country to be a mere joke, and confirmed your own interest, as well as established your consequence in the proper place, by securing half a dozen Boroughs. As to Religion, you soon unravelled every mystery of that, and not only know the Bible to be as romantic as the Alcoran, but have also written several

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volumes

volumes to make your discoveries plain to meaner capacities. The ridiculous prejudices of a foolish world unhappily prevent your publishing them at present; but you have wisely provided that they shall one day see the light, when I doubt not they will be deemed invaluable, and be as universally admired as the posthumous works of Lord *Bolingbroke*.

I am,

May it please your Grace,

or, *My Lord,*

or, *Sir,*

in humble admiration of your excellencies,

&c. &c. &c.

O

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